

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Lawton, The Chauncey N. House

and/or common Sweeney, Butler and Simeri Law Firm

2. Location

street & number 405 West Wayne Street N/A not for publication

city, town South Bend N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Indiana code 018 county St. Joseph code 141

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Kevin J. Butler, Joseph V. Simeri and  
Charles A. Sweeney, Jr., as tenants in common

street & number 1246 E. Jefferson Boulevard; 1312 E. Wayne St.; 17711 Woodridge Dr., resp.

city, town South Bend N/A vicinity of state Indiana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County/City Building, Recorder's Office

street & number 227 W. Jefferson Blvd.

city, town South Bend, state Indiana 46601

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Indiana Historic Sites  
and Structures Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

---

## 7. Description

---

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved

date N/A

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Chancey Lawton House, built in the Italian Villa style, exhibits most of the characteristics of that style as described by Alexander Jackson Downing in Architecture of Country Houses, including the most distinctive feature, the three-story tower. The building is located on the border of the Central Business District in a commercial/residential mixed area on a long, narrow lot. Constructed of brick laid up in a stretcher bond, both the exterior and the interior of this two-story house are detailed with finely crafted wood trim.

One of Downing's major concerns was for "picturesqueness," which he felt could be achieved in the Italian Villa style by irregularity and a tower. Both are exhibited in this house. The plan is asymmetrical, a long rectangle, punctuated by two-story, polygonal bays on the west and south facades and the tower on the east facade. Although the major portion of the roof is flat as prescribed by Downing, the tower is topped by a slate, mansard roof, probably because of the influence of the Second Empire style which was gaining popularity at the time. To the left of the tower is the brick chimney. The tower which displays wrought iron cresting added by a recent owner, has four projecting, hooded dormers with stops supported by small, scrolled brackets. The double-hung, round-arched windows are recessed and topped by keystone motifs. The dormers provide a light, airy, well-ventilated, third floor room in the tower with an excellent view of the area.

Another of Downing's suggestions for the style was projecting eaves which, in this case, are supported by paired, scrolled, incised brackets and large dentils. This careful attention to detail continues on both the soffits and fascia which have recessed, molded panels.

Downing, in his book, prescribed different types of trim for each major style; for the Italian styles, it was the round arch. Although the double-hung windows of the Lawton house are topped by flat, brick lintels, the top corners are rounded. The windows are recessed in heavy, molded wood surrounds and have stone sashes. The fieldstone foundation echoes this window shape in its recessed fenestration.

The round arch is also one of the motifs in the detail of the two front doors. The main entrance, which opens into the foyer, has a transom built into it while the side door (east facade) has a separate transom. Both doors have heavy, ornate molding, as well as finely-executed, incised trim that hints of the careful detailing of the interior.

The most outstanding feature of the interior is the foyer with its curved staircase ending in a polygonal newel post with bird's-eye maple insets. The foyer enters into the library on the north and the drawing room on the west, both of which open into the dining room. In the rear of the house are the kitchen, a new half bath, and what may have been a pantry or scullery. The second floor has three large bedrooms, one small bedroom, and a bathroom.

Other interesting features of the interior include: heavy, three-dimensional molding surrounding doors and windows; elaborate cornices; intricate, artificially-grained door panels; and combination gas/electric chandeliers (still operable) with ornate plaster ceiling medallions.

The house is the only structure on a long, narrow lot. At one time a carriage house and a mid-20th century garage existed on the site but both have been demolished. A wrought iron fence, erected by a former owner, lines the front of the lot at the sidewalk. The only features which were lost and have been or are currently being reconstructed, are the concrete retaining wall, front sidewalks, and front porches (see #8, Significance).

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

Other interesting features of the interior include: heavy, three-dimensional molding surrounding doors and windows; elaborate cornices; intricate, artificially-grained door panels; and combination gas/electric chandeliers (still operable) with ornate plaster ceiling medallions.

The house is the only structure on a long, narrow lot. At one time, a carriage house and a mid-20th century garage existed on the site but both have been demolished. A wrought iron fence, erected by a former owner, lines the front of the lot at the sidewalk. The only features which were lost and have been or are currently being reconstructed are the concrete retaining wall, front sidewalks, and front porches (see #8 Significance). In addition, a former owner sandblasted the house, and although, the outer layer of the bricks was worn away, no serious pitting took place. The current owners have been advised to paint the bricks within three years to stabilize the facade.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1872

**Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Chauncey Lawton House is important to the history of South Bend as a fine example of the Italian Villa style and one of only two extant in the city. It is in excellent condition and retains its original character. It is also significant, however, as a showcase for the business endeavors of its original owner, who used it to display his and his companies' crafts.

As an Italian Villa style house, the Lawton house exhibits all the features prescribed by designers of the day: irregularity, a tower, projecting bracketed eaves, and rounded window heads. There have been no major alterations or additions; the building exists in its original state. The only features lost were the two front porches, which are currently being reconstructed from old photographs, and the front sidewalks and the concrete retaining wall, both of which were rebuilt by a former owner. The fine, wood detailing of both the exterior and interior has been well-maintained and looks much as it did in Mr. Lawton's day.

Chauncey N. Lawton came to South Bend from Allen County, Indiana, in 1872. That year he built his house at 405 West Wayne and in 1873 joined with Mason N. Walworth and Arteman Corbett to form the Walworth and Lawton Manufacturing Company. He was described as a "practical builder" in ads for the firm, which made doors, sash, frames, moldings, brackets, etc. His residence was evidently a showpiece for his talents as it exhibits finely carved brackets and cornice trim on the exterior, and carefully detailed moldings, cornices, and doors of exotic woods on the interior.

Evidence of the next enterprise he was involved with was also displayed at his home. In 1875, Lawton became the treasurer of the Building Stone and Pipe Manufacturing Company, later renamed Stone Pipe and Cement Company. During his tenure with the company, it began the production of Portland Cement (c. 1876), one of the first three cities in the U.S. to do so. Again, he exhibited his trade at home by building an unusual, concrete retaining wall with decorative, recessed panels and a circular, cement sidewalk to the two front entrances.

Lawton stayed with that firm until about 1880 when he became involved with the Phoenix Flour Mill. He remained with that company until 1888 when he left the area for a few years. He came back to South Bend to retire, and died in 1905.

The house passed on to Lawton's heirs until 1944, when it went to the family nurse; she sold it in 1978. Since then, the building has had two private owners who did the restoration work mentioned earlier, and it is currently owned by a firm of lawyers who use the house for their offices.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name South Bend west

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	6
---	---

5	6	2	0	3	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	6	1	3	6	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

B 

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

C 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

E 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F 

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

G 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H 

--	--

--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

**Verbal boundary description and justification**

Beginning at a point 59 1/4 feet East of the southwest corner of Lot Numbered Eight (8), in Block Numbered 4, as shown on the recorded Plat of William S. Vail's Addition to the Town, now City, of South Bend, thence running East on (Please see continuation sheet)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Karen L. Kiemnec, Historic Preservation Planner  
 organization Historic Preservation Commission of South Bend and St. Joseph County date August 2, 1982  
 street & number Room 1123, County/City Building telephone 219/284-9798  
 city or town South Bend state Indiana 46601

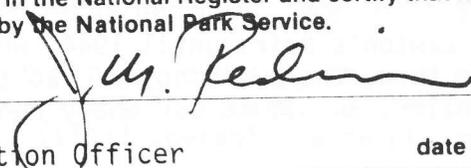
# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature



title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 5-6-83

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet Chauncey N. Lawton House

Item number 9

Page 1

Downing, Alexander Jackson, "The Architecture of Country Houses. New York: 1969.

Miscellaneous Record Book B, P. 289, St. Joseph County Recorder's Office

South Bend City Directory, 1871 to 1891

The South Bend Times, June 27, 1905. Obituary of Chauncey N. Lawton

South Bend Tribune, June 24, 1905. Obituary of Chauncey N. Lawton

Turners South Bend Annual and Business Mirror, 1869-1877

Unpublished paper by the Portland Cement Association, 1978, Discovery Hall Museum

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

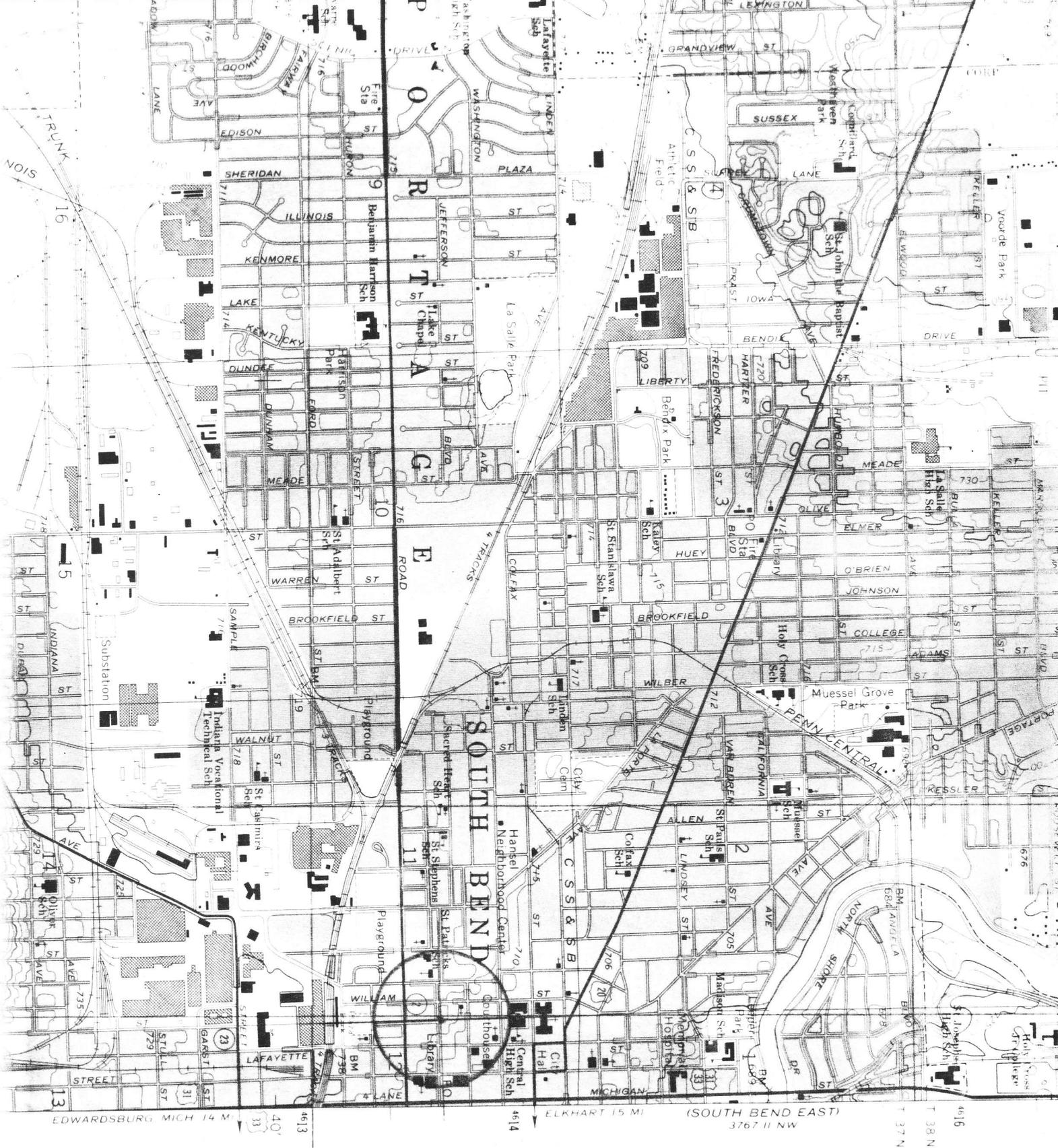
date entered

Continuation sheet Chauncey N. Lawton House

Item number 10

Page 2

the north line of Wayne Street in said City, a distance of 59 1/4 feet, to the Southwest corner of land formerly owned by John H. Dunn; thence North 12 rods to an alley; thence West 59 1/4 feet to a point due North of the place of beginning; thence South 12 rods to the place of beginning, being a strip of land 20.64 feet in width, East and West, taken off of and from the entire width of the East ends of Lots Numbered Five (5), Six (6), Seven (7), and Eight (8), in Block Numbered 4 in said William S. Vail's Addition, and a strip of land 58 1/2 links (or 38.61 feet) in width, East and West, taken off and from the entire length of the West side of the South half of a parcel of land known as "Johnson's Two Acres" in said City of South Bend, all in St. Joseph County, Indiana.



Chauncey N. Lawton House  
 South Bend, Indiana  
 UTM Reference: 16/562030/4613610